

News Release



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Contact: Joe Rosato
(916) 653-9472
California State Parks
Jrosa@parks.ca.gov

State Park Bond Act Funds to Transform Stockton Landmark into Teen Center

(STOCKTON, CA) Stockton area teens who spearheaded efforts to renovate a landmark bowling alley for a new life as a downtown teen center saw a part of their dreams come through today (November 1, 2002) with the presentation of a check to the city for more than \$2 million.

The Stockton project is one of 44 inner city projects selected for funding under the Murray/Hayden Youth Services Grant Program of Proposition 12. The Park Bond Act of 2000 established the Murray-Hayden Grant Program as a competitive program designed to address the critical lack of parks and services for youth in heavily urbanized areas impacted by significant poverty and unemployment.

At the urging of the city's youth, Stockton will use the \$2,219,500 grant to transform a bowling alley purchased by the city into the El Dorado Teen Center and Bowl. The attractive Art Deco structure which was constructed in 1946, has long been a landmark within the community.

Under the city's plans, one-half of the bowling alley will be transformed into a gymnasium for basketball and volleyball. The other half will remain intact, as well as an existing coffee shop and social lounge that will be operated by teens as a "micro enterprise."

City officials said the grant funding is expected to cover all design and construction, hazardous materials abatement, bowling alley retrofit, adjustments to accommodate disabled persons and all renovations to the building interior and exterior.

Governor Gray Davis said earlier in announcing the funding that, "Our children are our future. Parks and recreational programs can make a major difference in the lives of young

people. We need to reach out to as many neighborhoods as possible to help young people become productive young adults."

In addition to Stockton, projects were awarded in Los Angeles, San Francisco, San Diego, Gilroy, Fresno, Sacramento, Oakland and other cities. The projects were chosen based on several factors, including a critical lack of parks and/or open space; deteriorated park facilities; significant poverty and unemployment; and a shortage of services for youth.

The funding is the final in a series of Proposition 12 funding allocations administered by the California State Department of Parks and Recreation. Under the "Safe Neighborhood Parks, Clean Water, Clean Air and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2000," passed by voters in March 2000, California State Parks conducted extensive public hearings and outreach workshops to write guidelines for allocating the funds. The response was overwhelming and more than 180 applications -- totaling more than \$220 million funding -- were received for the \$42.2 million bond.

A listing of projects selected and amounts provided may be found by visiting www.parks.ca.gov under 2000 Bond Act Programs.

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